

III. REMARKS

The Examiner's careful consideration is appreciated. The respective paragraphs of the DETAILED ACTION are discussed below. Claims 21, 22, 25, 26 and 29 are amended to clarify the definition of the invention.

Paragraph 3: Objections to claims 21 and 25 are noted and corrected.

Paragraphs 4-5: Concerning the rejection of claims 21-23, 25-27, and 29-32 under 35 USC 102 based on Faruque *et al.*, Publication 2003/149500: The independent claims 21 and 29, as amended, define a continuous loop system with separate users having predetermined functions in a network of work stations, each having restricted access to list identifiable data and functions, dependent on the function of a group member in the task force. Separate data files and separate program functions are stored, identifiable as a list item, in a retrievable format from a restricted access work station. Upon the completion of a virtual simulation a list item associated with the data record of the simulation model and the characteristics of the virtual simulation of the model become available for selection and retrieval from a list as a discrete data file record accessible at the work station, supplanting prior versions of the model.

Paragraphs 6-8: Concerning the rejection of claims under 35 USC 103 based on joint inventorship, claims of the application were invented by joint inventors/assignors/employees at a time when the claims were commonly owned by the assignee of the application.

Paragraph 9: Concerning the rejection of claim 24 under 35 USC 103 based on Faruque *et al.*, claim 24 is amended to include step 7) wherein the data record of the

simulation model and the characteristics of the virtual simulation in a format retrievable as a listed item in the central master record database supplants previous records of the model evaluated.

Paragraph 10: Concerning the rejection of claim 28 under 35 USC 103 based on Faruque *et al.*, and Hazama *et al.*, Patent 6,212,441, the claim defines a continuous loop refining the design of a mechanical model in a virtual format from the beginning of a design process to the end of a design process for a designated mechanical assembly. The library is maintained in a central master file database wherein each work station is located apart from the central master file database and the work stations are singly identifiable with in a separate function. A menu at each work station restricts a member's access to a work station dependent upon a member's association with a specified group. Upon the completion of a simulation, any prior record of the mechanical assembly simulated is replaced with a record of the model and the characteristics of the virtual simulation of the model processed.

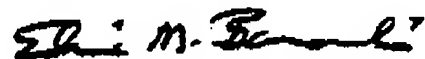
Applicant submits that with respect to Faruque *et al.*, the Examiner is applying Faruque *et al.*, beyond any legitimate interpretation of the reference. Faruque *et al.*, ignores the realities of specialized functions associated with a group members. Groups and tasks are each specialized, not overlapping functions. Members of different disciplines may be located in separate sites. Faruque *et al.*, describes a single user station for processing data independent of user function or user access restriction; Faruque *et al.*, stores data, only upon successful completion of a test. In reality,

numerous iterations of a simulation are required with changes in design, connectors, materials and the like proposed by multiple members having different skills, with differing responsibilities in a group with a common objective. Hazama *et al.*, is similarly not applicable as Hazama *et al.*, relates to managing customer fabrication orders, not successive iterations of design changes consistent with defined group member responsibility in an enterprise design environment.

The independent claims, as amended, thusly distinguish over the references, as do the dependent claims 22-28 and 29-32 that incorporate the similar limitations respectively, of claim 21 and claim 29.

Entry of the amendment, reexamination and allowance is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions or suggestions in view of the foregoing, applicant's undersigned attorney requests that the Examiner initiate a telephone call to the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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IV. CERTIFICATE OF FILING BY FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I certify that the foregoing Amendment and Response To the Office Communication Mailed on September 7, 2007 [12 pages] accompanied by Transmittal Form [PTO/SB/21 - 1 page] and Petition for Extension of Time Form [PTO/SB/22 - 2 pages] are being filed by facsimile transmission on February 7, 2008 to Group Art Unit 2123, Attention: Examiner Eunhee Kim, Facsimile Number 571-273-8300 [Alternate address: Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop Amendment, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450].



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